

Tucker Building  
1516 Jefferson St./595 16th St.  
Oakland  
Alameda County  
California

HABS No. CA-2645

HABS  
CAL  
1-OAK,  
26-

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94107**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY  
TUCKER BUILDING

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- Location:** 1516-28 Jefferson St./595 16th St., Oakland, Alameda Co., CA 94612.  
Parcel No. 3-69-1.
- Significance:** This building is a contributing structure to the Oakland Downtown district. The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey describes the district as, "...an architecturally, historically, and functionally distinct area within central Oakland. It contains the City Hall and a strong concentration of well-preserved commercial buildings from about 1900 to 1929, spanning two boom periods for Oakland, the East Bay response to the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906, and the intense real estate and financial growth of the 1920s. These urbane, mostly Beaux-Arts inspired buildings display a general unity of style and scale, and represent many of the better-known Bay Area commercial architects of the period. In their siting and relation to each other, with 17-21-story "skyscrapers" punctuating lower construction, they represent an urban design termed "ideal" by City Beautiful planner Werner Hegemann in 1915, and gave Oakland a distinctive and much-photographed skyline. Downtown's development was one of a series of distinct stages whereby Oakland's commercial center moved north along Broadway from its original waterfront location in the 1850s, to Uptown (around 20th) in the 1930s. The economics of the era in which the 14th and Broadway district developed made it Oakland's office and financial center, in contrast to the Old Oakland district alterations and demolitions, in their historic relationships to one another, skyscrapers spaced among lower buildings creating a still-distinctive downtown Oakland skyline."
- According to the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey: "[the Tucker Building] is an attractive example of small-scale 1920s storefront/light industrial architecture, and typifies the less intense development on the fringes of downtown."
- Description:** The Tucker Building is a rectangular, (105'x28'), brick structure with a basement level, a ground floor retail/work level, and a partial second floor. The California Department of Parks and Recreation Office of Historic Preservation "Primary Record," prepared by Bruno Giberti states, "The building has a rectangular plan and was designed to be attached. Street walls are made of orange brick laid in common bond. Bays are irregular in size, with simple brick piers supporting an entablature-like parapet. The recessed corner entry has a double wood door with glass lights. The mezzanine has casement-type wood windows, painted red and green with decorative mullion patterns. Three southern bays on the west side of the building have punched openings with utilitarian casement-type wood

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windows, and a double wood loading door. The parapet is defined at top and bottom by courses of stretcher, soldier and rowlock brick. The basement extends under the sidewalk and is illuminated by concrete grates with glass-block lights. The storefronts have been altered with new aluminum display windows and orange-tile bases. The original brass window surrounds and cast-iron vent grills remain. Other alterations include new slider-type aluminum windows"

The basement extends approximately ten feet beneath the sidewalk on both the north and west sides, with a sidewalk elevator at the northwest corner. One row of 2' x 2' concrete posts and one row of 8"x 8" wooden posts run the length of the building. Along the east wall, two sets of open stairs, one metal and one wood, lead to the first floor level.

The first floor is divided into many small spaces by non-contributing gypsum board partitions. The north end is entered through a recessed corner entrance and has a loft above, accessed by ladder. A metal staircase at the southwest corner of the front room leads to the basement. Modern aluminum display windows replace the original ground floor windows here; however, the original decorative windows remain at the loft level. The loft space is approximately five feet high with wallpaper and paint finishes that appear to be earlier than finishes in the rest of the building.

The central, first floor area is a two story space with stairs leading to the second floor. Decorative windows, changing shape and rhythm south of the exterior door, penetrate the west wall. Interior doors link this central area with the front and rear sections of the building.

The south end is a one story space with a kitchen, lavatory and toilet room. Two leaf, wood, and glass loading doors provide access to the exterior, while a door at the northeast corner provides access to the basement. The second floor sits above this southern space and consists of a bathroom, one large and two small rooms.

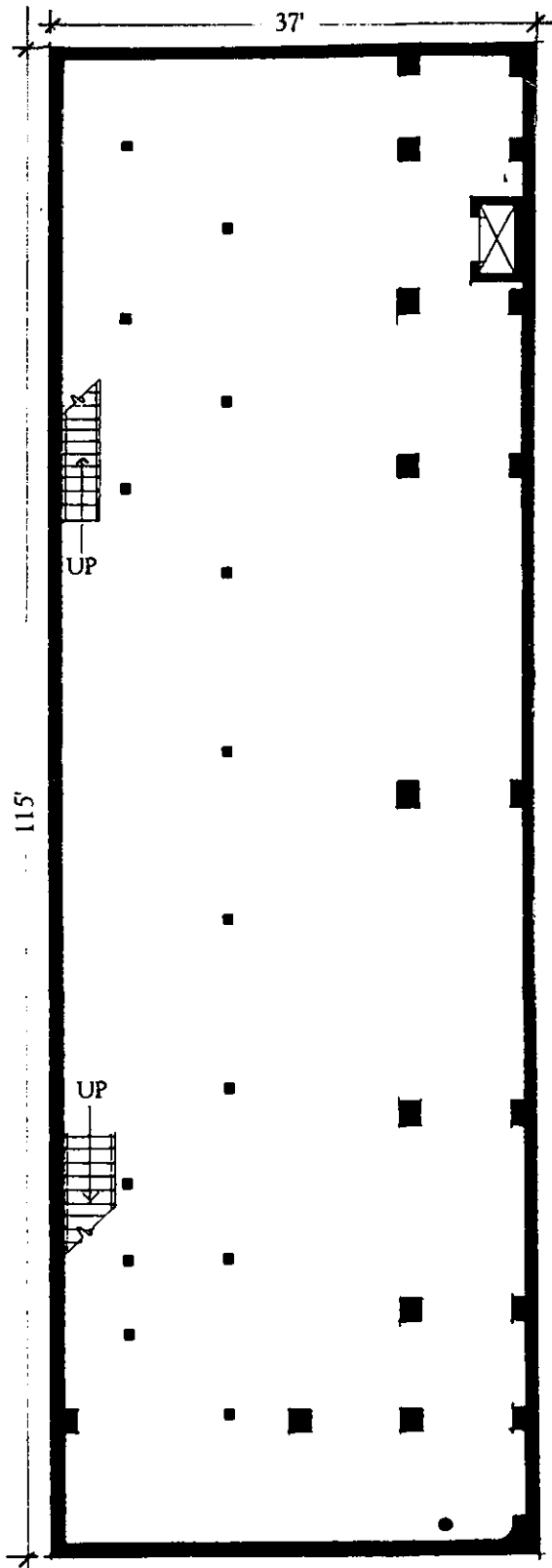
**Historical Context:** According to the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey: "Permit #83912 for this one-story, \$21,968 brick store building was issued October 5, 1923, to owner A.J. Tucker and builder James L. Rich: plans which might identify an architect are not available. An Arthur J. Tucker in city directories in the mid-20s was manager for Metropolitan Life Insurance: this would fit the pattern for small-scale speculative building by many members of the business, financial, and architectural communities in central Oakland in the 1920s. Sanborn maps and directories indicate that this building was occupied from 1924 at least into the early 1940s by American Railway Express, later Express Agency. "

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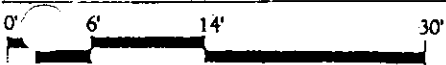
**Sources:** Bruno Giberti, Archaeological/Historical Consultants, California  
Department of Parks and Recreation, Office of Historic Preservation,  
"Primary Record", 1994.

City of Oakland Office of Planning and Building. Oakland Cultural  
Heritage Survey. "Historic Resources Inventory." 1985.

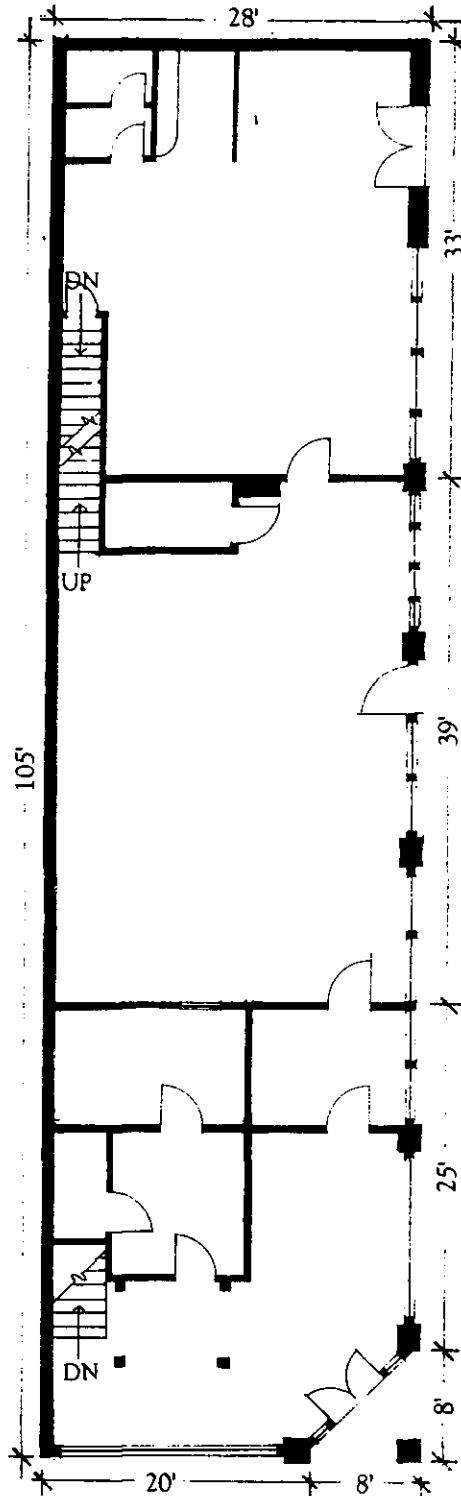
**Project Information:** Carey & Co. Inc., Architecture, prepared this survey for EIP Associates.  
The structure is scheduled to be demolished for the construction of the  
Elihu M. Harris State Office Building on its site. Nancy Goldenberg,  
Architectural Historian, was project manager for Carey & Co. and Elizabeth  
Roberts was primary author of this document. The report was prepared in  
August, 1995.



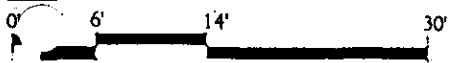
BASEMENT LEVEL



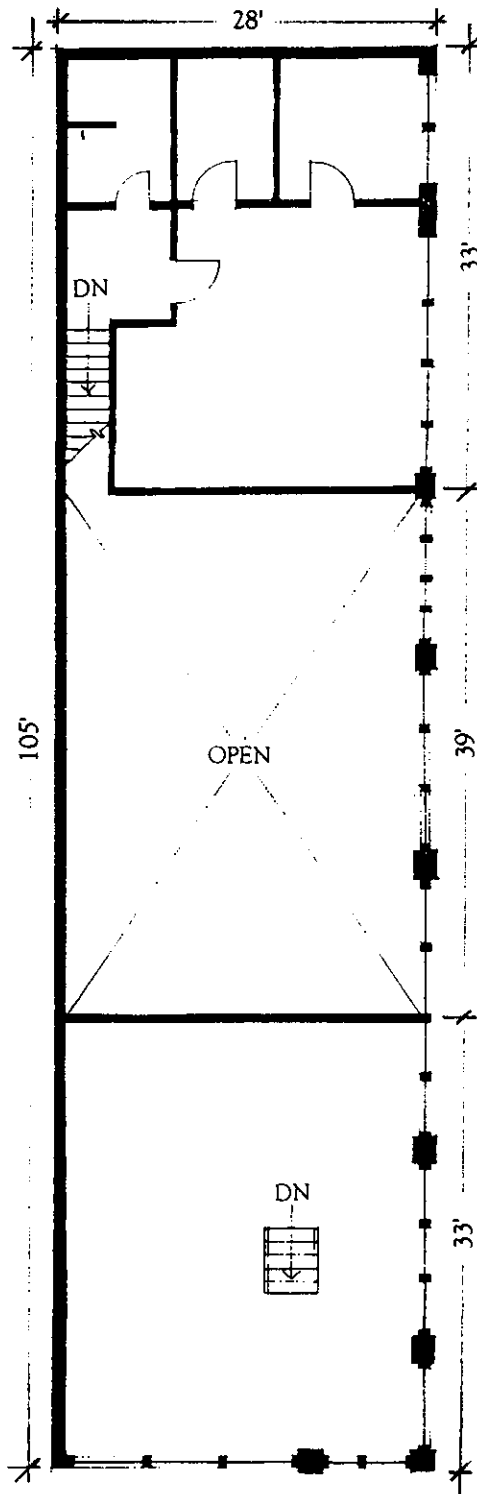
CAREY & CO. INC.  
ARCHITECTURE



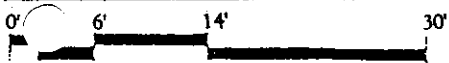
FIRST FLOOR



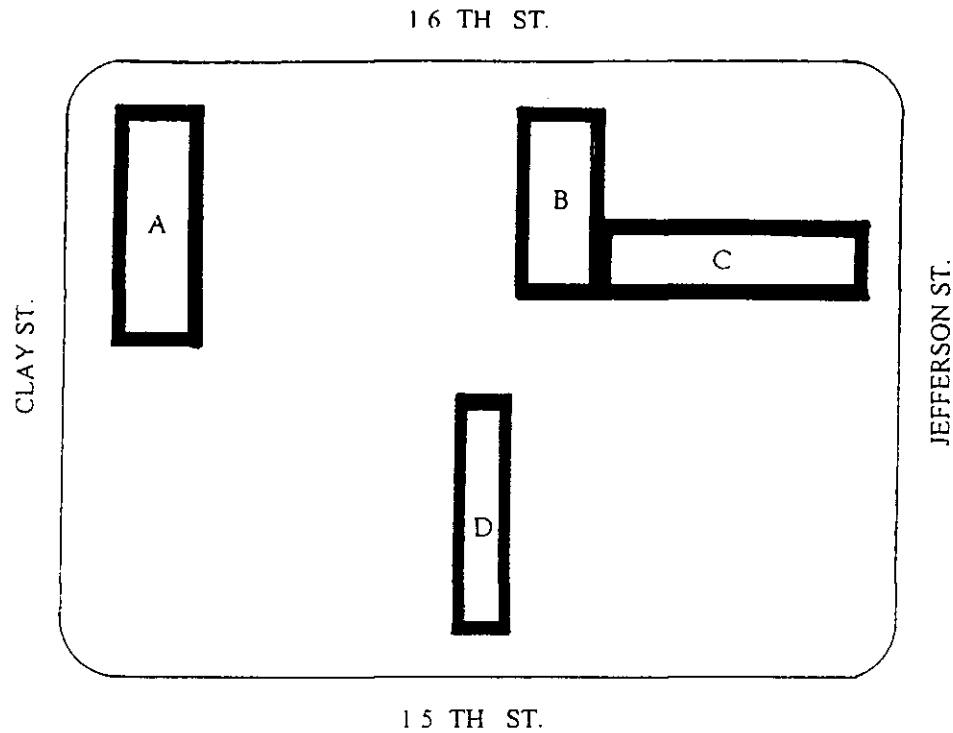
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SECOND FLOOR



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ARCHITECTURE



- A. TUCKER BUILDING
- B. ALAMEDA COUNTY LOAN ASSOCIATION BUILDING ANNEX
- C. STULSAFT BUILDING
- D. COAKLEY BUILDING



SITE PLAN



CAREY & CO., INC.  
ARCHITECTURE